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C O N F I D E N T I A L COLOMBO 001344

SIPDIS

DEPARTMENT FOR SA, SA/INS, S/CT; NSC FOR E. MILLARD

E.O. 12958: DECL: 08-01-13

TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PTER](#) [PINS](#) [MOPS](#) [CE](#) [NO](#) [LTTE](#)

SUBJECT: In discussion with Charge', Norwegian
Ambassador reviews upcoming visit by Tigers to France

Refs: Colombo 1339, and previous

(U) Classified by James F. Entwistle, Charge'
d'Affaires. Reasons 1.5 (b,d).

11. (C) The Charge' met August 1 with Norwegian Ambassador Hans Brattskar to discuss the latest news regarding Sri Lanka's peace process. Concerning a recent camp put in place by the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) in the east, Brattskar said there is no sign of movement on the issue. (Note: The Tigers have refused to vacate the camp, despite a ruling by the Sri Lanka Monitoring Mission, "SLMM," that its establishment violates the February 2002 ceasefire accord -- see Reftels.) He added that there was some hope that LTTE political chief S.P. Thamilmelvam's ongoing visit to eastern Sri Lanka may presage some change in the Tigers' heretofore hard-line stance, but it was not yet clear. Charge' asked that the Norwegian facilitators keep the U.S. apprised of the situation.

12. (C) With respect to the larger peace process picture, Brattskar had some interesting new information. According to his account, Thamilmelvam and a delegation of Tiger cadre plan to head to France within the next two weeks to attend a seminar on legal issues. (Note: The issues under discussion at the seminar would involve the debate over the formation of a Tiger-dominated interim administration in the north/east, as well as federalism issues linked with a potential final settlement of the dispute.) Brattskar confirmed that the French government had approved the Tigers' participation on July 31, after considerable internal debate. The French agreed to host, he noted, when assured that the seminar would be run in a very low-key manner. (Note: Due to the French sensitivities, Brattskar asked that we keep their decision close-hold.) He said the Tigers were quite enthusiastic about the GoF decision, hoping that it indicated some sort of thawing in western countries' negative view of the LTTE. (Note: Brattskar noted that the Canadian government, which had been approached to host the seminar, had decided not to.) Brattskar added that it was not yet clear whether Tiger spokesman Anton Balasingham, who is based in London, would participate in any way in the seminar.

13. (C) Comment: The news re the controversial camp is still not what the Norwegians, the GSL, and virtually everyone else wants to hear, i.e., the LTTE has vacated the site. The Tigers are being quite stubborn on the matter, so it is undoubtedly going to take some more time to resolve. Concerning the seminar in France, Brattskar remarked that he thought it what was a genuine effort by the Tigers to learn more about constitutional/legal issues. It is the case that the sum of Tiger expertise on such issues hovers around zero, which they readily admit. End Comment.

14. (U) Minimize considered.

ENTWISTLE